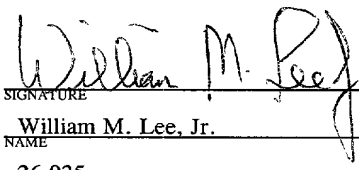


FORM PTO-1390 (REV. 5-93)		U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 518-1013
TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US) CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371			U. S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.5) 09/673947
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/FR99/01014	INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE April 28, 1999	PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED April 28, 1998	
TITLE OF INVENTION Food Dispensing Chest			
APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US Bernard Viville			
Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:			
1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is a FIRST submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.			
2. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a SECOND or SUBSEQUENT submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.			
3. <input type="checkbox"/> This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 37 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).			
4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.			
5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input type="checkbox"/> is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau). b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> has been transmitted by the International Bureau. c. <input type="checkbox"/> is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US). 			
6. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).			
7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input type="checkbox"/> are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau). b. <input type="checkbox"/> have been transmitted by the International Bureau. c. <input type="checkbox"/> have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired. d. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> have not been made and will not be made. 			
8. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).			
9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).			
10. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).			
Items 11. to 16. below concern other document(s) or information included:			
11. <input type="checkbox"/> An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.			
12. <input type="checkbox"/> An assignment document for recording A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.			
13. <input type="checkbox"/> A FIRST preliminary amendment. <input type="checkbox"/> A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.			
14. <input type="checkbox"/> A substitute specification.			
15. <input type="checkbox"/> A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.			
16. <input type="checkbox"/> Other items or information:			

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.50) 097673947		INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/FR99/01014		ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 518-1013	
17. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted: Basic National Fee 37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5): Search Report has been prepared by the EPO or JPO.....\$1000.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482)..\$860.00 No international preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) but international search fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) \$710.00 Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$690.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(2)-(4) \$100.00				CALCULATIONS	PTO USE ONLY
ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =				\$860	
Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <u> 20 </u> <u> 30 </u> months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).					
Claims	Number Filed	Number Extra	Rate		
Total Claims	10 - 20 =		X \$18.00	0	
Independent Claims	1 - 3 =		X \$80.00	0	
Multiple dependent claim(s) (if applicable)			+ \$270.00	270	
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =				1130	
Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27. The fees indicated above are reduced by 1/2.				565	
SUBTOTAL =				565	
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than <u> 20 </u> <u> 30 </u> months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).				----	
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =				565	
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property +				----	
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =				565	
				Amount to be refunded:	
				Charged	
a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of \$ <u>565</u> to cover the above fees is enclosed. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my Deposit Account No. <u>12-0913</u> in the amount of \$ <u> </u> to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. <u>12-0913</u> . A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.					
NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.					
SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: William M. Lee, Jr. Lee, Mann, Smith, McWilliams, Sweeney & Ohlson P.O. Box 2786 Chicago, Illinois 60690-2786 (312) 368-1300					
				 SIGNATURE William M. Lee, Jr. NAME 26,935 REGISTRATION NUMBER	

528 Rec'd PCT/PTO 24 OCT 2000

Please acknowledge
receipt of the
enclosed:

New Patent Application of:
Bernard Viville

United States Patent Application For:

Food Dispensing Chest

SERIAL NO: TO BE ASSIGNED

FILING DATE: HEREWITH

1. PCT Transmittal Letter in duplicate
2. Check No. 41830 in the amount of \$565.00
3. Declaration and Power of Attorney
4. Verified Statement Claiming Small Entity Status
5. Certificate of EXPRESS MAIL.
6. Return Post Card.

DUE DATE: October 28, 2000

DATE SENT: October 24, 2000

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"Express Mail" mailing label number

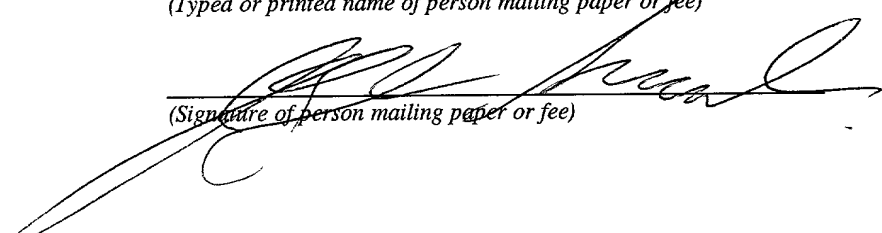
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Date of deposit: October 24, 2000

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United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee"
service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is
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A CHEST FOR DISTRIBUTING FOOD.

The present invention relates to a chest for distributing food prepared prior to being eaten, such as cooked dishes or desserts. More specifically, the chest serves to store and present trays provided with culinary preparations; it can even be used for transporting the trays.

Such preparations are generally put onto the trays in a kitchen, and they are then transported by means of a refrigerated van before finally being unloaded and placed on tables in the premises where they are eaten, e.g. a buffet.

Firstly, it is necessary to have a refrigerated vehicle.

Secondly, unloading needs to be performed shortly before the preparations are eaten so that they are not spoilt by being stored at ambient temperature. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to know in advance the precise time at which the preparations are going to be eaten.

Thirdly, labor is required to load the van, to unload it, and to put the trays on the tables.

An object of the present invention is thus to provide a food distributing chest which considerably minimizes the above-mentioned constraints.

According to the invention, a food distributing chest is provided with a vertical mast on which supports are fixed; the chest has lifting means for moving the mast in vertical translation, and in addition at least some of its supports are movable in rotation about an axis which coincides with the mast.

Preferably, the chest is suitable for maintaining a constant temperature.

In a preferred embodiment, said mast is adjacent to one of the vertical edges of the chest.

Furthermore, the chest includes a housing provided with thermal blocks.

According to an advantageous characteristic, the lifting means are implemented on the basis of a spring.

Furthermore, the chest has a lid which, in the open position, forms two horizontal shelves.

5 Additionally, the supports are adjustable forks whose two tines are provided with facing grooves.

Optionally, a spacer is placed between two supports on the mast.

10 Furthermore, the chest is provided with a retractable guide to facilitate insertion of the supports.

Also, the chest is provided at its bottom with castors.

15 The present invention is described in greater detail below in the following description of embodiments given by way of non-limiting example and with reference to the accompanying figures, in which:

• Figure 1 is a perspective view of a chest in a first mode of use;

20 • Figure 2 is a perspective view of the chest in a second mode of use; and

• Figure 3 shows an embodiment of the supports.

Elements that are present in more than one figure are given the same references in each figure.

25 In Figure 1, the chest 1 is shown in its storage or transport position except that its lid is open. It is in the form of a box having a vertical mast 4 disposed therein close to the middle of one of its side walls, the mast being provided with supports 2 and being shown in
30 this figure in its low position.

Advantageously, the walls of the chest are lagged to maintain a constant temperature. A housing 5 such as a drawer is thus provided to receive hot or cold thermal blocks. These blocks are commonly available in the trade
35 and are generally provided with a fluid having high specific heat, and depending on the intended use, they are previously stored in an oven or in a refrigerator so

as to become a hot or a cold source. The housing in this case is located at the bottom of one of the side walls since this disposition is favorable when culinary preparations are to be kept hot.

5 Furthermore, in order to make the chest easier to move, it is preferably provided with castors 9 fitted to its bottom.

In a preferred embodiment, the lid of the chest 1 comprises two identical plates 6 hinged to the tops of
10 two opposite side walls. The hinges are designed so as to come into abutment when the plates are perpendicular to the side walls, i.e. when they are substantially horizontal. Thus, the open lid forms two shelves located on opposite sides of the chest.

15 In Figure 2, the chest 1 is shown in its in-service position, without its lid. The mast 4 slides on a guide column (not shown) and is shown here in its high position. Lifting means (not shown either) serve to move the mast along its axis from its low position in abutment
20 against the bottom of the chest, to its high position where the supports are clear of the chest 1.

The mast 4 can be displaced manually. It is pulled vertically into its high position and it is held in this position by locking means. To return it to the low
25 position, it suffices to release the locking means and allow the mast to move back down to the bottom of the chest.

The mast 4 could also be motor-driven, e.g. by means of a worm screw.

30 It will readily be understood that the mast can be moved by any known means, be they electrical, pneumatic, or hydraulic. It is even possible to envisage using a mechanical system with counterweights if manual actuation is preferred.

35 Nevertheless, according to a preferred characteristic, the mast 4 is actuated by means of a spring, e.g. a gas spring. Under such circumstances, the

mast is easy to handle and the chest is entirely self-contained since it does not require an energy source such as an electric battery.

The supports 2 in this case are in the form of forks
 5 engaged on the mast 1. To this end, a circular orifice is provided in the center of the base of each support. At least some of the supports can pivot about the axis of the mast. It is thus possible to offset them angularly so as to form a helix, with the left tine of one support
 10 coinciding approximately with the right tine of the support situated immediately below it. Thus, no support is directly masked by the other supports overlying it.

A retractable guide 8 such as a telescopic rod is preferably provided to facilitate storing the mast 1 in
 15 its low position. Before moving the mast, all of the supports are brought into abutment against the guide 8 which is disposed against a side wall. As a result, the supports do not strike the top of the chest when the mast is lowered.

20 Furthermore, if the gap between two supports 2 is too small, then a spacer 7 can be placed between the two supports.

With reference to Figure 3, a preferred support, i.e. a fork, comprises two tines provided with facing
 25 grooves. A tray 3 carrying a culinary preparation is inserted in the grooves which also serve to hold it. In addition, the forks are adjustable so that they can accommodate trays of different sizes.

30 So far, the mast 4 has been shown in the vicinity of the middle of one of the side walls of the chest 1. Depending on the shape of the supports and on the type of presentation desired for the trays, it can be more advantageous to arrange the mast in the vicinity of one of the vertical edges of the chest.

35 The embodiments of the chest given above are given purely by way of example and the person skilled in the art will understand that the invention can be implemented

in many different ways, merely by replacing some means by equivalent means.

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CLAIMS

- 1/ A chest (1) for distributing food, the chest being provided with a vertical mast (4) on which supports (2) are fixed, the chest having lifting means for moving the mast in vertical translation, and being characterized in that at least some of said supports are movable in rotation about an axis which coincides with said mast.
- 2/ A chest according to claim 1, characterized in that it is suitable for maintaining a constant temperature.
- 3/ A chest according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that said mast (4) is adjacent to one of its vertical edges.
- 4/ A chest according to any preceding claim, characterized in that it includes a housing (5) for thermal blocks.
- 5/ A chest according to any preceding claim, characterized in that said lifting means are implemented on the basis of a spring.
- 6/ A chest according to any preceding claim, characterized in that it includes a lid which, in an open position, forms two horizontal shelves (6).
- 7/ A chest according to any preceding claim, characterized in that said supports (2) are adjustable forks whose two tines are provided with facing grooves.
- 8/ A chest according to any preceding claim, characterized in that a spacer (7) is placed between two supports (2) on said mast (4).
- 9/ A chest according to any preceding claim, characterized in that it is provided with a retractable

guide (8) for facilitating insertion of said supports
(2).

10/ A chest according to any preceding claim,
5 characterized in that it is provided at its bottom with
castors (9).

A B S T R A C T

A CHEST FOR DISTRIBUTING FOOD

5 The present invention relates to a chest (1) for
distributing food, the chest being provided with a
vertical mast (4) on which supports (2) are fixed. The
chest has lifting means for moving said mast in vertical
translation, and in addition at least some of the
10 supports are movable in rotation about an axis which
coincides with the mast.

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35 Translation of the title and the abstract as they were when originally filed by the
Applicant. No account has been taken of any changes that may have been made
subsequently by the PCT Authorities acting ex officio, e.g. under PCT Rules 37.2,
38.2, and/or 48.3.

Applicant or Patentee: VIVILLE Bernard

Attorney's

Serial or Patent No.:

Docket No.: 518-103

Filed or Issued:

For:

VERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY
STATUS (37 CFR 1.9 (f) and 1.27 (b)) — INDEPENDENT INVENTOR

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that I qualify as an independent inventor as defined in 37 CFR 1.9 (c) for purposes of paying reduced fees under section 41 (a) and (b) of Title 35, United States Code, to the Patent and Trademark Office with regard to the invention entitled caisson de distribution d'aliments described in

☐ the specification filed herewith

☒ application serial no. PA/FR 99/01014, filed April 28, 1999

☐ patent no. _____, issued _____

I have not assigned, granted, conveyed or licensed and am under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey or license, any rights in the invention to any person who could not be classified as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9 (c) if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9 (d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9 (e).

Each person, concern or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

☒ no such person, concern, or organization

☐ persons, concerns or organizations listed below*

*NOTE: Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

FULL NAME Bernard VIVILLE Quartier Le Deffend 13122 Ventabren - FRANCE
ADDRESS _____

☒ INDIVIDUAL

☐ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN

☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

FULL NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

☐ INDIVIDUAL

☐ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN

☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

FULL NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

☐ INDIVIDUAL

☐ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN

☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28 (b))

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

Bernard VIVILLE

NAME OF INVENTOR

NAME OF INVENTOR

NAME OF INVENTOR

Signature of Inventor

Signature of Inventor

Signature of Inventor

Date

Date

Date

19 octobre 2000.

October 19, 2000.

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated

below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled CAISSON DE DISTRIBUTION D'ALIMENTS, the specification of which:

— is attached hereto.

☒ was filed on 23 APRIL 1999 as

Application Serial No. PCT/FR99/01014

and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)

<u>Country</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Date Filed</u>	<u>Priority Claimed</u>	
			<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>FRANCE</u>	<u>98/05636</u>	<u>April 28, 1998</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
<u> / </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code Section 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

<u>Application Serial No.</u>	<u>Filing Date</u>	<u>Status</u>
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And I hereby appoint Wm. Marshall Lee, Registration No. 16,853, John M. Mann, Registration No. 17,775, Thomas E. Smith, Registration No. 18,243, Dennis M. McWilliams, Registration No. 25,195, James R. Sweeney, Registration No. 18,721, William M. Lee, Jr., Registration No. 26,935, Glenn W. Ohlson, Registration No. 28,455, David C. Brezina, Registration No. 34,128, Jeffrey R. Gray, Registration No. 33,391, Timothy J. Engling, Registration No. 39,970, Gregory B. Beggs, Registration No. 19,286 and Gerald S. Geren, Registration No. 24,528 as my attorneys to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith. It is requested that all communications be directed to Lee, Mann, Smith,

McWilliams, Sweeney & Ohlson, P.O. Box 2786, Chicago, Illinois 60690-2786, telephone
number (312) 368-1300.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole or first inventor: ¹⁻⁰⁰ Bernard VIVILLE

Signature [Signature] Date OCTOBER 19, 2000

Country of Residence: FRANCE

Country of Citizenship: FRANCE

Post Office and Residence Address: Quartier Le Deffend 13122 Ventabren
France FRX

Full name of joint inventor: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Country of Residence: _____

Country of Citizenship: _____

Post Office and Residence Address: _____

Full name of joint inventor: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Country of Residence: _____

Country of Citizenship: _____

Post Office and Residence Address: _____